

State Legislative Action Creating Welfare System

Article XXV, Oklahoma Constitution, provides:

Article I. Relief and Care of needy, aged and disabled persons - Cooperation with Federal Plan.

In order to promote the general welfare of the people of the State of Oklahoma and for their protection, security and benefit, the Legislature and the people, by initiative petition, are hereby authorized to provide, by appropriate legislation, for the relief and care of needy aged persons who are unable to provide for themselves and other needy persons who, on account of immature age, physical infirmity, disability, or other cause, are unable to provide or care for themselves. Provided, the Legislature or the people, by initiative petition, are further authorized, in cooperation with and under any plan authorized by the Federal Government for State participation, to provide by appropriate legislation for the relief and care of aged or needy persons.

The levy of taxes, other than ad valorem taxes, necessary to carry into effect legislation enacted pursuant thereto, is hereby authorized. As added State Question No. 225, Initiative Petition No. 154, adopted July 7, 1936. As amended State Question No. 299, Referendum No. 81. Adopted Special Election March 11, 1941.

Creation of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority

By the terms in Oklahoma House Bill 1573, passed by the State House and Senate and signed into law by the Governor in May of 1993, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA) was created. As of January 1, 1995, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority was designated as the Medicaid Single State Agency to administer the Title XIX programs in Oklahoma. Legal authority for the Oklahoma Health Care Authority to administer Medicaid is found in Oklahoma State Statute 63, Section 5003 et seq.

As the Single State Agency, OHCA has final authority over Medicaid programs and has the power to exercise administrative discretion in the administration and supervision of the Medicaid State Plan. OHCA assumed responsibility for operation of all components of Title XIX with the exception of eligibility determination, which the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) performs for OHCA under an interagency agreement. The Act also provided for certain duties and responsibilities of the Authority and the Authority's Board; it provided for powers and duties of the Authority's Administrator, for personnel, for expenditures and disbursement.

The Oklahoma Health Care Authority was empowered by Section 5006 of Title 63 of new law to, among other provisions,

- "develop and submit plans, reports and proposals, provide information and analyze areas of public and private health care interaction pursuant to the Oklahoma Health Care Authority Act
- serve as a resource for information on state-purchased and statesubsidized health care access, cost containment and related health issues.
- administer programs and enforce laws placed under the jurisdiction of the Authority pursuant to the Oklahoma Health Care Authority Act
- and, exercise all incidental powers which are necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority Act".

Section 7,B,1 of House Bill 1573 also states that "the Authority shall contract with the Department of Human Services for the determination of Medicaid eligibility and other administrative or operational functions related to the State Medicaid Program as necessary and appropriate". In keeping with this provision, Attachment 2.2-A, Pages 1-27, will continue to reference the Department of Human Services, as they shall maintain the eligibility functions for the Medicaid program; in addition, Attachment 1.2-D, Page 1, provides an overview of that function as provided by an agency other than the Single State Agency.

NOTE: In addition to work alterations submitted in the transition pages which change "DHS" and other related designations to variations of "OHCA", all other pages not submitted at this time are considered so changed for purposes of assumption of Medicaid program duties by the Oklahoma Health Care Authority as required by Oklahoma law cited above, with the exception of Attachment 2.2-A, Pages 1-27, which correctly list the Oklahoma Department of Human Services as the agency handling eligibility for OHCA.

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